

DREDGE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 2, 2005 DES PEASE FIELD OFFICE

The meeting was held on Wednesday November 2, 2005 from 1:30 PM to 3:25 PM at DES office, 50 International Drive, Pease Tradeport.

Announcements/Introductions – Chairman asked members to introduce themselves.

Attending members:

Olga Guza, EPA
Collis Adams, DES
Frank Richardson, DES
Michael Sills, DES
Steve Bird, City of Dover
Dean Peschel, City of Dover
Tracy Shattuck, PDA-DPH
Grant Nichols, PDA-DPH
Mike Yeager, PDA
Mike Johnson, NMFS
Periklis Karoutas, US Rep. Jeb Bradley
Clare McBane, NH F&G
Tim Lyons, Senator Gregg
Rich Roach, ACOE
Saji Varghese, ACOE
Mike Walsh, ACOE
Michelle Juliano, NH DOT
Matthew Moore, NH DOT

Staff:

Chairman, Chris Williams, NH Coastal Program/DES
Ted Diers, Manager, NH Coastal Program/DES
Mary Power, NH Coastal Program/DES

Guests:

Dave Merrill, Boatmoorings.com
Craig Morin, Appledore Engineering
Bob Snover, Appledore Engineering
Natalie Landry, DES

Review of minutes – July 21, 2005. Chairman Williams asked if there were any corrections needed. No substantive comments from members. Minutes approved.

Cocheco River Dredge – COE (Mike Walsh) said that Congress has not yet passed the COE's budget. As a result, there's no money available this year to complete the project. ACOE issued contract bid documents in early September, with hopes that money would become available prior to the expiration of the 60-day bid price on October 31st. ACOE requested a bid price extension but the bidder elected not to extend his price. ACOE (Walsh) stated that once money is appropriated, he will put project out to bid again and hopefully award a contract this fiscal year so that the project can start as soon as possible in the 2006/2007 dredge season.

NH F&G (Clare McBane) said it would prefer that an extension of the dredge window occur in March, at the end of the dredge season, and that any blasting should occur between Nov. 15 and Dec. 15. COE (Walsh) said the winning bidder had proposed using a hydraulic hammer instead of blasting. He asked for a discussion regarding a time extension at the beginning of the dredge season. Chairman recalled a meeting in June 2005 between ACOE, NH F&G, DES Wetlands and the Coastal Program in which that issue was discussed, but no decision made. City of Dover (Dean Peschel) said Bill Ingham of NH F&G had previously discussed the possibility of changing the drawdown date of Bow Lake (the headwater of the Isinglass River, which is the major tributary to the Cocheco River) to "flush" fish out of the system earlier in the fall, thereby allowing the Cocheco dredge season to begin earlier.

Discussion followed regarding the dredge window and completion of the dredging project in one vs. two seasons. EPA (Guza) asked if it would be better for the environment to complete the project in one extended dredge season. NMFS (Johnson) said it might be better but he doesn't have the data to prove that. City of Dover (Bird) said it would be better financially to complete it in one season. DES (Richardson) recommended that ACOE focus on the "maintenance" aspect of the project, which involves removing the accumulated sediments from the navigable channel, and remove rock protrusions only if time permits. COE (Walsh) stated that COE's mandate is to dredge the channel to -6ft mlw. Discussion followed. COE (Walsh) said that suggestion would be considered. Chair stated that the Coastal Program staff would contact the DES Dam Bureau and NH F&G to discuss an earlier drawdown of Bow Lake and the potential opening of the dredge window earlier in the season.

NH F&G (McBane) asked if it would be necessary to revise the previous EIS to address blasting. COE (Walsh) said the permit issued by DES Wetlands Bureau references blasting, however, if blasting is necessary COE would pursue permit amendment if necessary. NMFS (Johnson) said if blasting means more significant impact to resources then it would likely require a revision of the EIS. Chair asked if the wetlands permit has any conditions that would be affected by an extended dredge window. DES Wetlands (Richardson) said that permit could be amended to accommodate a time extension.

UNH Pier - UNH, COE, NHF&G, NMFS, DES - COE (Roach) said that the rock in the cribs will be removed and placed in an upland location. Chair asked about the COE and Wetlands Bureau permits. COE (Roach) said it is overdue but forthcoming. DES (Richardson) said the file has to be reviewed again to ensure that the plans are accurate and up-to-date before issuance of wetlands permit.

Sagamore Creek - COE (Walsh) stated that UNH (Fred Short) has conducted aerial survey of the eelgrass areas and did some of the ground truthing, however, COE is not certain where the eelgrass issue stands. COE (Roach) said there is no new information on Witch Cove Marina. There will be a meeting with the marina owner and the COE District Engineer to resolve encroachment issue. Chair asked about a timeframe for the meeting. COE (Roach) said he is uncertain as it is not a priority. Discussion followed.

Legislative Update - NH Coastal Program (Ted Diers) said that the FY06 budget will be finalized within the next few weeks. Tim Lyons of Sen. Gregg's office said that Thanksgiving is the target date for adjournment. If the issue is not addressed before that adjournment it will be brought up again after session begins in 2006, and the funds will likely be available by next summer. He continued by saying there is speculation that some of the money will be rescinded but Senator Gregg has opposed it saying it would be an inappropriate place to make cuts. Coastal Program (Diers) said Senator Sununu's office is interested as well and will be up to date on it. He continued by saying that he will meet soon with the COE and Ports and Harbors to identify the projects and amount of money to request for the upcoming 2007 budget. This issue will be on the next Task Force agenda for members to discuss. EPA (Guza) asked if a state Dredge Management Plan was put in as a budget request. Coastal Program (Diers) said it should be discussed further. Discussion followed regarding federal legislative support for the disposal site issue. Coastal Program (Diers) said a letter will be sent to our delegation as has been done in the past. He spoke about the Cape Arundel site that will no longer be available for disposal as of 2009 when it is due to close. If the legislation were to move forward it may reauthorize that site or another site somewhere between Portsmouth, NH and Portland, ME. He mentioned four projects in the FY06 request: Cocheco River, Hampton study (\$50,000), Piscataqua Turning Basin and the Simplex project.

Helix Anchoring Systems - Dave Merrill from Boatmornings.com gave a presentation of the Helix environmentally friendly anchoring systems.

COE (Roach) suggested NH plan their harbors taking into account the desire of the transient public to have a place to dock or anchor for one or two nights. The COE would like to see anchorages maintained so that harbors that are protected by breakwaters built at government expense will be available to every boater rather than only those residents of NH who are able to acquire a mooring permit.

Discussion followed after the presentation such as the cost of the product, availability and the possible requirement by towns to use only environmentally friendly moorings. Chair mentioned that eelgrass-friendly moorings are to be installed in Little Harbor as part of

the COE's mitigation requirement for the recent City of Portsmouth water main replacement project. COE (Roach) said he hopes the City of Portsmouth and the Div. Ports and Harbors are working on getting them installed in areas that have eelgrass so that a fly-over can be done to photograph and monitor.

Other Business:

New Castle Avenue Road and Seawall Reconstruction - DES (Richardson) recently met with Portsmouth Public Works department and since that time Normandeau Associates has put together some alternatives to be reviewed by NMFS and other regulatory agencies. Because some of the fringe marsh along the road will need to be removed, one strategy is to place the material in other locations in Portsmouth such as South Mill Pond and adjacent causeway. NMFS (Johnson) would like to review the revised plan. DES (Richardson) hopes to have it finalized by next week.

Erosion issues, Sun Valley, Hampton - Chairman informed members of a meeting that is scheduled for Nov. 3, 2005 at Hampton Town Hall to talk about alternatives to reduce/eliminate shoreline erosion in the Sun Valley area of Hampton. On July 21st members of the NH Coastal Program, DES Wetlands Bureau and the Town of Hampton met with staff from Elemental Innovation, Inc. to discuss the practicability of using wave attenuators to reduce wave energy and erosion in the area. It appears that the wave attenuator method may be cost prohibitive. Chairman said there will be an update on this issue at the next Task Force meeting.

Regional Dredging Meeting, Sudbury Group - EPA (Guza) informed members of the regional dredge management meeting to be held in Sudbury, MA on November 16, 2005.

Ocean Disposal, Portland & Mass Bay - EPA (Guza) said she is in the process of rewriting the Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) for the ocean disposal sites in Portland, ME and Mass Bay. She asked if material from NH has been deposited at either of these sites and, if so, how much. Chairman said he will find that information for her.

Schedule next DMTF meeting - DES (Diers) asked if Jan. 11, 2006 is good for everyone. Most agreed. The meeting will occur at the DES Pease office at 1:30 PM.

NH Comprehensive Upland Dredge Material Disposal Study Overview - ACOE (Saji Varghese) gave a presentation on the upland dredge material disposal study. Discussion followed.

Adjourned 3:25 PM